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AUTHOR Kapel, David E.; Wexler, Norman
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ABSTRACT

A semantic differential based on three factors: evaluation, potency, and activity was administered to 278 freshmen in 11 communications sections at a state college to study attitudes toward selected college related stimuli (Black students, professors, Glassboro State College, Afro-American courses, white students, me-myself). Students were classified by sex and whether they were regular students or high-risk students. Conceptual differences were found between high-risk and regular students. The rebirth of pride in being black was reflected by the high-risk students on all factors. White males tended to be more negative in their feelings toward blacks than white females as far as evaluation was concerned. Blacks had significantly lower acceptance of whites than did whites of blacks on evaluation. Blacks tended to be more racially sensitive than whites. The evaluation factor was more sensitive to racial identification than were the two other factors. (Author/AF)

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An Investigation of Selected Factors in the Affective Domains of High Risk Black and Regular College Freshmen

David E. Kapel and Norman Wexler

A semantic differential was administered to 278 freshmen in 11 communications sections at a state college to study attitudes toward selected college related stimuli (black students, professors, Glassboro State College, Afro-American courses, white students, me-myself). Students were classified by sex and whether they were regular students or high risk students. Scores were analyzed by a least-square four-way factorial analysis of variance with repeated measures on two factors. A posteriori comparisons were made on the basis of significant sex x stimulus x factor and student classification x stimulus x factor interactions.

Conceptual differences were found between high risk and regular students. Effects of black activity were reflected in the data. Evaluative appraisals were determined by racial membership. Females generally had more positive evaluative feelings than males. The evaluation factor was more sensitive to racial identification than were the other two factors. All groups had high mean scores for blacks on the activity and potency factors.

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David E. Kapel, Temple University
and
Norman Wexler, Glassboro State College

An Investigation of Selected Factors in the Affective Domains of High Risk Black and Regular College Freshmen

Colleges and universities throughout the United States have in recent years developed programs for high risk students. Unlike high risk students of a generation ago (athletes, off-spring of graduates, foreign students, war veterans, etc.), the new high risk students have been described by Egerton (1968:7) as "those whose lack of money, low standardized test scores, erratic high school records and race/class/cultural characteristics, taken together, place them at a disadvantage in competition with the preponderant mass of students in the colleges they wish to enter". The high risk students involved in this study fit Egerton's description.

Problems of self-identification and ideas of Black Power and help from the "establishment" are often in conflict when the high risk students are black (Egerton, 1968). Studies on black consciousness have indicated that there is now a positive change toward black being good as reported by Friedman (1967) and by Kaspenbauer (1967). Using the Bogardus Social Distance Scale and semantic-differential ratings for the concepts: Negro; white; integration; and segregation, Proenza and Strickland (1967) found blacks more favorable toward the concepts black and integration and less favorable toward segregation than were whites. They also found that blacks were more favorable toward the concept white than were whites toward the concept black.

Campbell and Schuman (1968) found in a study of racial attitudes in several American cities that there was a clear trend for young black men to be more separatist in their thinking than the general black community; however, they did find that a substantial number of blacks want both integration and black identity (emphasizing black consciousness without rejection of whites).

Purpose

As part of the evaluation of the high risk program at a state college, an attempt was made to assess or describe and compare the attitudes and/or semantic structures toward college related and personal stimuli of the group with regular freshmen.

Procedures

Subjects: Subjects were all freshmen students taught by the four communications instructors who were selected to teach sections that included all of the high risk students; however, some of their sections had only regular students. All students present at the time of data collection were included in the study. As none of the subjects knew when or that they were to be measured, no contamination or bias of the data was considered present due to absenteeism. In all, 278 students from 11 sections were measured.

Although an Arts and Science College, the moderate sized institution functions primarily in the area of teacher preparation. Subjects in the study, however, were uncommitted to specific programs when the investigation was conducted.

The data was classified by sex and whether the subject was a high risk (N=44), a regular freshmen (N=155), or a regular freshmen in sections devoid of high risk students (N=79). Thus, six comparison groups were formed. It should be noted that the high risk group was exclusively black and though there were black students among regular freshmen, they were so few in number that for purposes of this study, the regular students were considered as exclusively white.

Instrument: Osgood's Semantic Differential Technique (1957) was applied by using a three page instrument designed in accordance with the method. Every

page contained two stimuli each followed by 12 "scales" measuring the factors: evaluation; potency; and activity. One limitation was that no neutral or "buffering" stimuli were used. It was hoped that the instrument would not be tedious nor take more than ten minutes to administer, thus, disrupting ongoing classes as little as possible. To avoid order effects, six page sequences were assembled and distributed for administration in approximately equal amounts.

The college related stimuli were chosen using the judgment of the authors and director of the high risk program. The stimulus "me-myself", as in many other studies employing the Semantic Differential Technique (see Geis, 1968), was used to establish a "base" from which to make more meaningful descriptions. Scales were chosen that had relatively high loadings on the factors, and, where a choice was available, judged to be more subtle or suitable than others. Eight response options corresponding to the values one through four and six through nine were used for each scale. Missing responses were given the neutral value of five. The order and polarity of the scales as well as the order of factors were randomized within the restrictions that a factor would occur once in every sequence of three scales and the polarity was balanced for each factor. The stimuli and scales are summarized in Table 1.

Standard instructions to the subjects indicated that a word association study was being conducted observing how students relate or associate some descriptive words with certain "things" that exist at the college.

Based on a wealth of past use of the Semantic Differential (Geis, 1968) it was assumed that the data was reliable and valid for purposes of the present study.

Data Collection: Data was collected by the authors and a graduate assistant

TABLE 1

Stimuli and Scales

Stimuli	Order	Scale	Factor
	1	hard (+)[a] - soft	potency
Page B.	2	unfair - fair (+)	evaluation
Black Students	3	dull - sharp (+)	activity
Professors	4	cruel - kind (+)	evaluation
	5	heavy (+) - light	potency
Page G	6	angular (+) - rounded	activity
Glassboro State College	7	sweet (+) - bitter	evaluation
Afro-American Courses	8	green - red (+)	activity
	9	small - large (+)	potency
Page W	10	profane - sacred (+)	evaluation
White Students	11	rugged (+) - delicate	potency
Me-Myself	12	hot (+) - cold	activity

NOTE: [a] (+) denotes high scoring direction on indicated factor

during the first week in January near the end of the first semester. The Semantic Differential was administered at the beginning of the period in which it was given. Instructions were read aloud while the subjects read to themselves. It consistently took about ten minutes to complete the task. The data was anonymous, however, subjects were asked to classify their sex and whether they were admitted to the college under a special program. The accuracy of classification results was checked against known section information and found satisfactory.

Analysis of the Data: Several computer programs were written to organize the subject's responses so that scores for every stimulus within each factor were obtained. Each of the resulting 18 scores (six stimuli, three factors per subject) was the sum over four scales (refer to Table 1).

The scores were analyzed simultaneously by a least-squares four-way factorial analysis of variance with repeated measures on two factors (i.e., sex x student classification x stimulus x factor; with stimulus and factor as repeated measures). The primary interest in the complex design was to obtain appropriate error terms for a posteriori tests on mean differences. Effects significant at the .01 level or beyond were considered statistically meaningful. Only high order interactions involving both stimuli and factors had educational or psychological meaning for the present study. No attempt was made to interpret other significant effects.

A posteriori tests were made in the manner suggested by Winer (1962). The Newman-Keuls procedure was employed where three or more means were contrasted. When simple effects reflected both between and within group variation, the appropriate error sum of squares and degrees of freedom were pooled to produce an error variance to test mean differences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mean scores for both sexes within each student classification are given in Table 2. Those means are reported separately for each stimulus within each factor. Additionally, means are presented when separately pooled over sex and student classification.

Results of the analysis of variance reflecting overall differences among means are summarized in Table 3.

Two triple interactions reflecting mean differences important for the purposes of the present study were found to be significant beyond the .01 level. A posteriori comparisons of means performed on the grounds of those significant results are visually summarized in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 may be used to identify significant differences in means due to the sex by stimulus by factor interaction. A critical difference of 1.6 score points determined significance between sexes. As a result of the Newman-Keuls procedure, significant differences within sex required values from 1.7 to 2.2 score points for males and 1.4 to 1.9 score points for females.

Figure 2 summarizes significant results due to the student classification by stimulus by factor interaction. Critical mean differences ranged from 2.2 to 2.5 score points for significance between student classifications. Within classification critical differences ranged from 1.4 to 1.9; 1.8 to 2.4; and 2.7 to 3.6, respectively for Regular freshmen, regular freshmen in classes with King Scholars, and King Scholars.

No attempt will be made to focus on or discuss all significant differences; these are illustrated in the figures. Only the more cogent relationships will be discussed here.

As a result of the small number of black males (N=23) and females (N=21) that were inbedded in the students studied, the analyses by sex

TABLE 2

Stimuli Means by Factor, Sex, and Student Classification

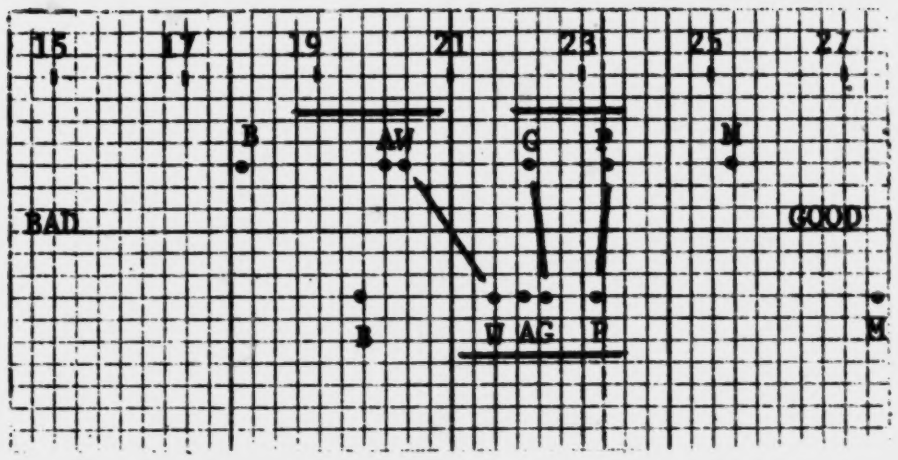
Student Classification	Sex	N	Stimuli: Black Students	Professors	Afro-American Courses	Glassboro State College	White Students	Me-Myself
EVALUATION								
Regular Freshman	M	65	16.0	23.6	19.9	23.4	21.9	25.2
	F	90	19.4	23.6	21.9	23.1	22.0	27.6
	M+F	155	18.0	26.6	21.1	23.2	21.9	26.6
Regular Freshman in classes with King Scholars	M	31	15.0	24.9	17.2	23.7	21.6	25.4
	F	48	19.0	23.0	21.2	22.4	23.4	28.0
	M+F	79	17.4	23.7	19.6	22.9	22.7	27.0
King Scholars	M	23	26.6	20.5	24.1	16.7	14.1	25.5
	F	21	21.8	22.1	24.9	19.5	15.7	25.9
	M+F	44	24.3	21.3	24.5	18.0	14.9	25.7
Total	M	119	17.8	23.4	20.0	22.2	20.3	25.3
	F	159	19.6	23.2	22.1	22.4	21.6	27.5
POTENCY								
Regular Freshman	M	65	23.5	20.5	19.2	16.2	21.4	22.1
	F	90	23.2	21.1	20.6	17.7	19.8	15.4
	M+F	155	23.3	20.8	20.0	17.1	20.5	18.2
Regular Freshman in classes with King Scholars	M	31	22.0	19.4	18.9	16.8	21.8	23.4
	F	48	23.8	21.6	22.1	19.0	19.0	13.7
	M+F	79	23.1	20.7	20.8	18.2	20.1	17.5
King Scholars	M	23	25.4	23.6	18.1	19.3	18.0	22.7
	F	21	24.1	25.1	19.1	22.3	18.4	19.2
	M+F	44	24.8	24.3	18.6	20.7	18.2	21.0
Total	M	119	23.5	20.8	18.9	17.0	20.8	22.6
	F	159	23.5	21.8	20.8	18.7	19.4	15.4
ACTIVITY								
Regular Freshman	M	65	22.9	18.9	21.3	17.6	20.4	21.7
	F	90	22.8	19.3	21.5	17.2	20.1	20.5
	M+F	155	22.9	19.1	21.4	17.4	20.2	21.0
Regular Freshman in classes with King Scholars	M	31	22.5	19.4	20.9	17.5	20.6	23.4
	F	48	23.4	17.8	21.8	17.5	20.5	19.9
	M+F	79	23.1	18.4	21.5	17.5	20.5	21.3
King Scholars	M	23	24.9	19.8	23.1	16.0	18.0	22.6
	F	21	24.2	19.3	21.3	15.8	18.4	20.8
	M+F	44	24.5	19.5	22.2	16.0	18.2	21.8
Total	M	119	23.2	19.2	21.6	17.3	20.0	22.3
	F	159	23.2	18.8	21.6	17.1	20.0	20.4

TABLE 3

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE SUMMARY

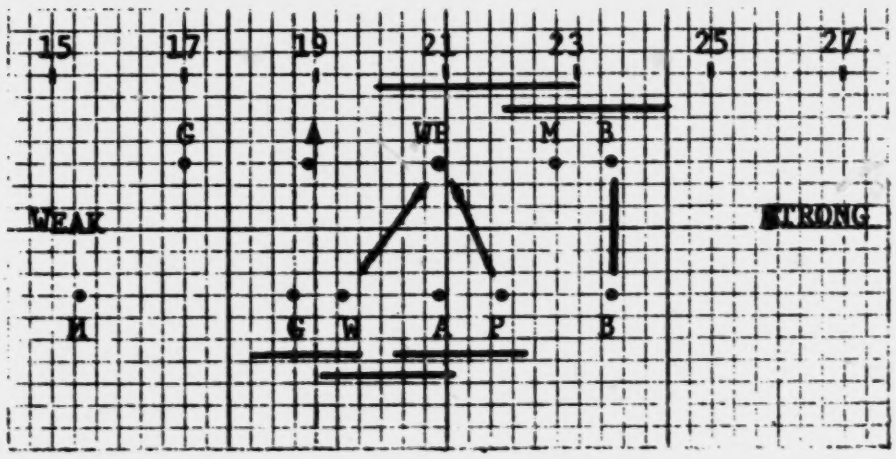
Source	df	MS	F
Between Subjects (Ss)	277		
Sex (S)	1	4.92	---
Student Classification (F)	2	5.64	---
S x F	2	3.70	---
Ss within groups (Error 1)	272	42.27	
Within Subjects	4726		
FACTOR (D)	2	2071.66	54.1*
S x D	2	437.38	11.4*
F x D	4	132.94	3.5*
S x F x D	4	10.64	---
D x Ss W. groups (Error 2)	544	38.28	
Stimuli (C)	5	952.68	35.7*
S x C	5	323.03	12.1*
F x C	10	324.10	12.1*
S x F x C	10	93.71	3.5*
C x Ss W. groups (Error 3)	1360	26.69	
D x C	10	1653.62	67.4*
S x D x C	10	296.59	12.1*
F x D x C	20	194.17	7.9*
S x F x D x C	20	39.56	1.6
D x C x Ss W. groups (Error 4)	2720	24.52	

* $p < .01$

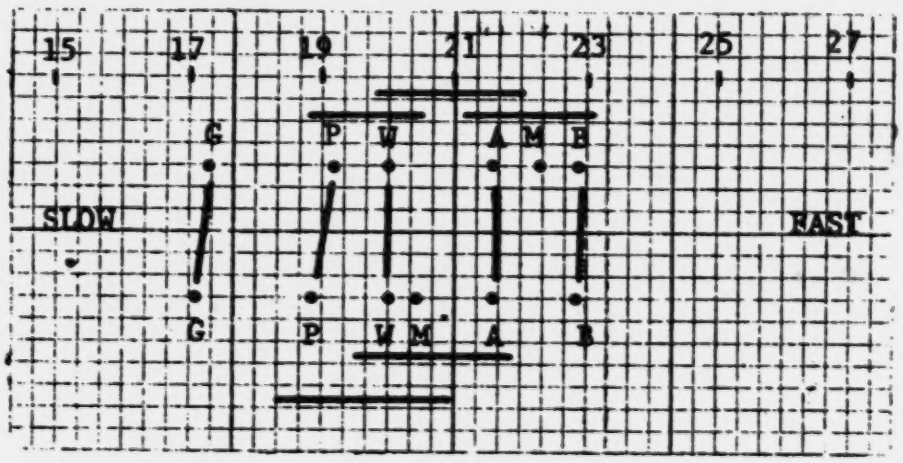


EVALUATION

B: Black Students
P: Professors
G: Glassboro State College
A: Afro-American Courses
W: White Students
M: Me-Myself



POTENCY



ACTIVITY

FIG. 1

Resulting means by sex classification. Stimuli with a common overscore, underscore, or connecting line are not statistically different.

B: Black Students
P: Professors
G: Glassboro State College
A: Afro-American Courses
W: White Students
M: Me-Myself
R: Regular Freshmen
R-KS: Regular Freshmen in Classes with King Scholars
KS: King Scholars

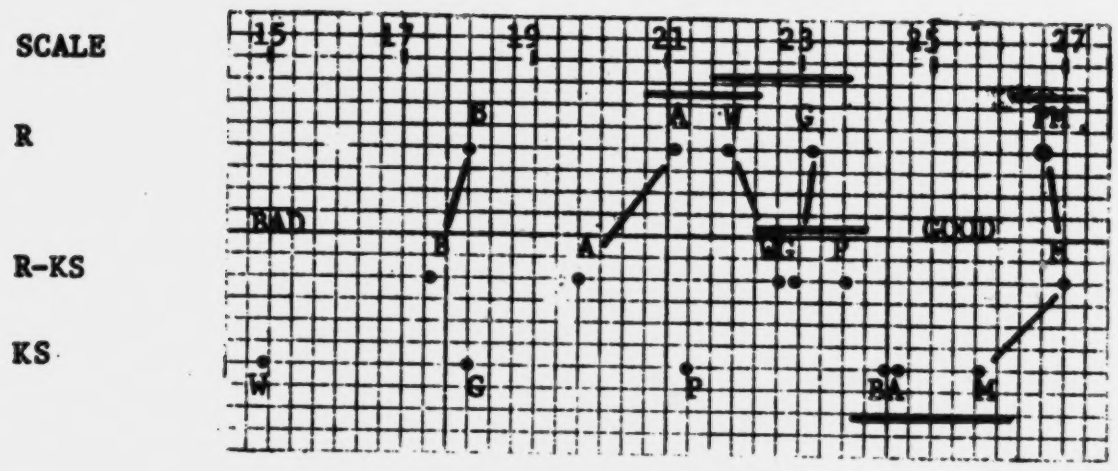


FIG. 2

Resulting means by student classification. Stimuli with a common overscore, underscore, or connecting line are not statistically different. For the Factor Activity, only W between R-KS and KS was statistically different; lines denoting non-significance between groups were omitted.

(Figure 1) can be assumed to reflect basically white male and female attitudes.

On the evaluation factor (how one feels about the stimuli, worth, acceptance), the males and females viewed themselves (me-myself stimulus) quite positively and blacks quite negatively. Although the females saw themselves and blacks significantly higher than did the males, the relationships of the two stimuli by both sexes were the same. Females tended to group the stimuli into three clusters, the males into four. The males felt Afro-American courses were significantly lower on the evaluation factor than did females.

Several reversals occurred on the potency factor (influence; strength; amount of adjustment toward stimulus) that were noteworthy in terms of sex differences. Blacks were considered quite strong (significantly higher than whites) by both sexes. The me-myself stimulus was very weak for females; me-myself was similar in strength to the black stimulus for males. The institution was considered weak by males; the females rated the college significantly higher, but still relatively weak.

Blacks were considered high on the activity factor (movement of stimulus; movement in adjustment toward stimulus) by both males and females, with the institution considered slow. Males viewed themselves significantly more active than did females. The spread among stimuli was not as great as it was on the evaluation and potency factors. Males and females appeared to have similar (not identical) views on activity.

Males viewed themselves higher than females in terms of activity and potency but not in terms of worth (evaluation). Blacks were considered potent and active, but their worth was not considered high by the students studied. Both sexes viewed the college as having value to them, but not

in terms of potency and activity. In general, females tended to have higher evaluative feelings than males. Other relationships--significant and non-significant--can be viewed in Figure 1; no attempt will be made to discuss each relationship illustrated.

Racial differences occurred in the study (Figure 2). On evaluation, all students viewed themselves as being high, and their racial opposites as being low (e.g., blacks viewed whites as low; whites viewed blacks as low). Whites didn't view white as being as important as did blacks view black. Afro-American courses were not viewed as being as important by whites as by blacks. Professors had higher ratings from whites than from blacks. Whites, regardless of class composition, tended to have similar feelings concerning worth or acceptance.

Again reversals occurred on the potency factor. Blacks were considered by all to be potent. Blacks had a significantly higher self-concept on potency than whites. Afro-American courses were not considered potent courses; whites had a higher value for such courses. Whites didn't consider professors as being influential as blacks. There were significant differences between blacks and whites on this, but not between whites. Blacks also considered the college as being significantly more potent than did whites.

Racial differences generally did not occur on the activity factor. All groups were similar and almost identical, save the white stimulus. Here blacks considered the whites to be significantly less active than did whites consider themselves. All considered blacks to be significantly more active than all other stimuli present. Afro-American courses were also considered to be quite active. The institution was considered by all groups to be less active than other stimuli; blacks had a significantly

lower feeling than whites.

Other significant relationships are evident from Figure 2. No attempt will be made to cover all combinations of relationships; only those most relevant to the study were discussed.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The data reflects the impact that the black community is having on higher education. This can be seen in the position blacks have on the potency and activity factors. The rebirth of pride in being black is reflected by the King Scholars on all factors. Reaction to black high risk students is mixed as far as whites are concerned; with worth or acceptance being low as reflected by white attitudes. The modifying socializing influences (McNeil, 1968) of mixing King Scholars with regular students is not evident in terms of acceptance. It appears from this study that white males are more negative in their feelings toward blacks than white females as far as evaluation is concerned. Blacks had a significantly lower acceptance of whites than did whites of blacks on evaluation. The attitudes of whites who were mixed with King Scholars did not appear to be much different from the attitudes of whites in classes without the King Scholars. The results indicate a definite polarizing of acceptance by race.

In general, blacks in this study tended to be more racially sensitive than whites; that is: racial identification was more evident with blacks than whites. The greatest differences and separations between and within groups (sex and student classification) on stimuli occurred on the evaluation factor--the worth or acceptance factor. Such differences and separations decreased on potency and almost did not exist on activity. Since this study was completed after only one semester of King Scholar attendance

at the college, it would be difficult to assume that a great deal of socializing had occurred between the high risk students and the regular students. Coupled with this is the possible effect on attitudes of off-campus activity, i.e., black militancy and subsequent black social progress. It would be difficult, if not dubious, to assess the findings in terms of causes and effects. This study will add to the bank of information that needs to be collected and evaluated by the higher education community as more and more high risk students (black and white) are being admitted to colleges and universities. Academic success for high risk students has been assessed to some extent by the American Council on Education (Astin, 1969), but more information on non-academic adjustment must be collected so that the problems of integration, separatism, and acceptance alluded to by Egerton (1968) will be better understood and hopefully solved.

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